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- 1 MR. BILL MILLS: My name is Bill Mills. [This plan to ship high-level radioactive waste across the country for 24 years deserves careful consideration. While it is true that has to be done with the waste, it doesn't have to be done immediately. Industry experts say that most of the waste could remain at the reactor sites where they are now stored for a hundred years.]

The half lives of some of these elements, 24,000 years for plutonium, 710,000 for uranium, several times the length of human civilization. The effects of a mistake made in haste now, could be with us for a very long time.

- 2 As the Department of Energy knows, [Yucca Mountain is a poor site for long-term storage partly because of the rapid movement of water through the ground which would corrode the underground metal containers and wash the waste into the groundwater, creating a sacrifice zone for a very long time.]

- 3 [The regulations can be changed so that it is legal to bury the waste there, but it won't change the fact that it would be a sacrifice zone. It may be that Yucca Mountain will be eliminated as a long-term repository site in favor of a better one. That might necessitate moving the waste a second time.

I think that we're in too big of a rush. [One of the components of the waste is plutonium, the most poisonous substance on earth. It is produced inside nuclear reactors, about 500 pounds a year from a 1000 megawatt power plant. And it only takes an atom or two to give you cancer if it's eaten or inhaled. We don't know what to do with poisons like this, that's clear. This problem will continue to get worse as long as we produce plutonium and the like in nuclear power plants. Moving the waste out of the more populous east to Nevada makes a lot of political sense. It also takes the pressure off the nuclear power industry, making it easier and cheaper to continue producing plutonium and the like, making more sacrifice zones inevitable.